



**Office of the Attorney General
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NEWS RELEASE

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**ATTORNEY GENERAL SUGGESTS ENERGY CONSERVATION TIPS FOR
TENNESSEE CONSUMERS**

Tennessee Attorney General Bob Cooper Jr. is offering Tennessee consumers some tips to keep heating costs down as cooler weather moves in and heating cost rise an estimated ten percent over last year. As a Consumer Advocate for the State, the Attorney General represents the public interest in matters such as public utilities.

This winter is forecast to be four percent colder than the 2006-2007 winter, according to the Energy Information Administration (EIA). In addition, the EIA anticipates heating costs will increase as follows: natural gas up 9.5 percent, electricity 3.9 percent, heating oil 21.8 percent, and propane 16.3 percent or an average of approximately 9.8 percent.

“As the days grow chillier,” Attorney General Cooper said, “consumers can take important steps to save on their energy bills and to help save our environment through the prudent use of non-replaceable fuels.”

Heating and cooling your home is the single largest energy expense for homeowners and because energy costs are expected to be higher, the Attorney General suggests to consumers the following simple steps you can take to save money on your energy utility bills:

***Carefully inspect your home for cracks and gaps and seal any you find.** Common sources of air leaks include cracks around windows and doors, gaps along baseboards, mail chutes, cracks in brick, siding, stucco or foundation, or where any external lines (phone, cable, electric, and gas) enter the home. Plugging air leaks with caulking, sealing, or weather stripping can save 10 percent or more on your energy bill.

***Lower your thermostat.** You can make a big difference in your heating bill by keeping your home at a slightly lower temperature. Lowering your thermostat one degree can cut as much as 10 percent off your overall heating bill.

***Defrost your freezer.** The frost and ice that builds up in your freezer over time causes your freezer to work harder to keep the freezer at a cold temperature. Routine defrosting will improve its efficiency.

***Consider solar heating.** Keep windows on the south side of your house clean to let in the winter sun.

***Close curtains and shades.** Close your curtains and shades at night to keep heat in and open them during the day to bring the natural heat into your home.

***Lower the temperature of your water heater and drain occasionally.** Although you need to keep your water heater above 120 degrees to prevent bacteria from building up, many hot water heaters are set too high. Draining some water from a water heater a few times a year reduces sediment and increases efficiency.

***Add additional insulation.** Adequate insulation in your attic, ceilings, exterior and basement walls, floors, and crawl spaces, as recommended for your geographical area, can save you up to 30 percent on home energy bills.

***Add an insulation blanket to your hot water heater.** The standard hot water heater is on all the time, so adding extra insulation will save more energy than you might think. Most hardware stores sell pre-made insulator “jackets” that can be easily wrapped around your water heater. Adding insulation to your water heater and any exposed pipes can knock up to 15 percent off the costs of heating water.

***Replace your most frequently used incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent lights.** Compact fluorescent light bulbs use up to 75 percent less energy as standard incandescent bulbs. The bulbs will pay for themselves since they last approximately 10 times as long as the traditional bulb.